

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 265519

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, MNUC

SUBJECT: NPG: PROPOSED POSTPONEMENT OF MINISTERIAL
MEETING

1. PROBABILITY THAT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE-DESIGNATE
RUMSFELD WILL NOT REPEAT NOT HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED BY SENATE
BEFORE NOVEMBER 19 CREATES PROBLEM CONCERNING US PARTICI-
PATION IN NPG MINISTERIAL, NOW SCHEDULED TO BE HELD AT
HAMBURG, NOVEMBER 19-21.

2. WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT US REPRESENTATIVE AT
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 265519

FORTHCOMING NPG MINISTERIAL BE ABLE TO SPEAK AUTHORITA-

TIVELY CONCERNING US NUCLEAR POLICY.

3. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE WOULD PREFER THAT MEETING NOT BE HELD AS SCHEDULED, AND WOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE TO FRG THAT NPG BE POSTPONED UNTIL JUST BEFORE DPC MINISTERIAL IN BRUSSELS. WE APPRECIATE GERMAN SENSIBILITIES ON THIS QUESTION. NEVERTHELESS, WE CONCLUDE THAT POSTPONEMENT IS THE BEST COURSE OPEN.

4. ACCORDINGLY, YOU SHOULD APPROACH MOD LEBER PERSONALLY AND MAKE A PRESENTATION BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- WHILE SECDEF DESIGNATE RUMSFELD HAS BEEN NOMINATED, IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT HE WILL BE CONFIRMED BY THE SENATE IN TIME TO LEAD THE U.S. DELEGATION TO THE NPG MINISTERIAL MEETING, AS PRESENTLY SCHEDULED IN HAMBURG.

-- GIVEN OTHER PERSONNEL CHANGES, THERE ARE NO OTHER SENIOR DOD OFFICIALS WHO COULD SPEAK WITH SUFFICIENT AUTHORITY ON NUCLEAR POLICY TO SUBSTITUTE AS HEAD OF THE U.S. DELEGATION. MOREOVER, WE ATTACH PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO DIRECT PARTICIPATION IN THE NPG ON THE PART OF THE U.S. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.

-- ACCORDINGLY, WE MAY HAVE NO OTHER OPTION BUT TO ASK THAT THE NPG MINISTERIAL MEETING BE POSTPONED, PERHAPS UNTIL MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, THE DAY BEFORE THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED DPC MINISTERIAL IN BRUSSELS.

-- BEFORE PROPOSING POSTPONEMENT, AND RECOGNIZING THE FRG'S PARTICULAR INTEREST IN THE NPG AS PARTICIPANT AND AS HOST, WE WISH TO REVIEW THE MATTER WITH MOD LEBER, TO GAIN THE BENEFIT OF HIS VIEWS AND, HOPEFULLY, HIS SUPPORT.

-- WE APPRECIATE FULLY THE EFFORT WHICH HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN BY THE FRG AS HOST AND, IN PARTICULAR, WE RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED BY THE FRG TO THE WORK OF THE NPG. IT IS ESPECIALLY FOR THE LATTER REASON THAT WE HOPE MOD
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 265519

LEBER WILL UNDERSTAND OUR REASONING IN PROPOSING POSTPONEMENT.

-- IN THAT REGARD, IT IS IMPORTANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE BASIS OF REQUEST STEMS FROM THE UNAVAILABILITY OF A SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND DOES NOT IMPLY ANY CHANGE IN U.S. NUCLEAR POLICY.

-- WE WOULD WELCOME MOD LEBER'S COMMENTS. WE WOULD BE WILLING TO CONSIDER ANY IDEAS HE MIGHT HAVE REGARDING POSTPONEMENT TO A DIFFERENT TIME THAN DECEMBER 8 OR TO A DIFFERENT LOCALE THAN BRUSSELS.

5. FOR USNATO: YOU SHOULD BRIEF SYG LUNS IN GENERAL TERMS ON THE FOREGOING APPROACH TO MOD LEBER. YOU CAN TELL LUNS THAT YOU WILL KEEP IN TOUCH WITH HIM ON DEVELOPMENTS.

6. THIS HAS BEEN COORDINATED WITH DOD.

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